

2008 Pre-Session Report

State Representative • Kevin Van De Wege • 24th Legislative District

Neighbor Survey

Please mark 1 if you strongly disagree, 5 if you strongly agree.

In general, our state is heading in the right direction.

5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1

In general, our nation is heading in the right direction.

5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1

In general, I feel Rep. Van De Wege does a good job representing me in Olympia.

5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1

I did/did not support his decision on:

Rising property taxes are putting unreasonable strain on my budget or likely will force me from my home.

5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1

The state needs to deal with the mortgage crisis.

5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1

Our children attending public schools are receiving the education necessary to make them competitive in the work force.

5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1

If I became seriously ill, I'd be in significant financial trouble.

5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1

More could be done to combat crime, but I generally feel safe in my community.

5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1

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State Representative
Kevin Van De Wege

24th Legislative District

Hello again from Olympia,

I'm hopeful this session will be another great one for our communities. Last year I had several bills pass, including two already working to create jobs in our area.

Recently I held nine town halls in less than two weeks. It was great hearing from you and I'd like to continue that conversation. Included in this newsletter is a survey. Your input would be very much appreciated.

Thank you for allowing me to represent you in the Legislature,

Kevin

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Assistant Majority Whip

Committees:

Agriculture & Natural Resources, Vice Chair
Technology, Energy & Communications
Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government & Audit Review
Joint Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs

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Putting back the 1 percent property tax cap

When our state’s Supreme Court overturned Initiative 747, capping increases on property taxes to 1 percent, I immediately called for

it to be reinstated. Last session I sponsored legislation to take action before the courts acted and was happy to finally pass it into law.

✔ Reinstating the cap on increases

Homeowners, including myself, feel uneasy about what their next property tax bill will look like. Capping one piece of the property tax issue is the least we could do in response to the initiative being overturned.

✔ Keeping family homes, allowing taxes to be paid later

When we met for the special session, we also passed a deferral program that will allow some families to put off up to 50 percent of their property taxes until they sell their home. This will provide breathing room for some of the low-income families I hear from worrying taxes will drive them from their home.

✔ Going further—working on broader reform

The special session spurred a lot of conversation about property taxes. People understand families with tight budgets are hurting. Several ideas are being discussed and I’m looking forward to fighting for relief for our district’s property tax problems.



Bringing jobs to the Peninsula

✔ Tax credit for rural counties

A state program to boost job growth in rural counties was going untapped for years. After passage of my House Bill 1566, 127 companies across the state took advantage of this credit to hire additional employees.

✔ Innovation Zones—coordinating research and business

We’re hoping to follow a recipe that created areas like Silicon Valley. My Innovation Partnership Zone legislation helps areas with institutions doing specialized research, to be better able to partner with related businesses. The success on either side will fuel growth, bringing good-paying jobs to their community. Two areas in our district were selected, Grays Harbor County and Sequim.

✔ Renewable energy from our paper industry

Alternative energy technology allows paper plants to trap energy released while making their products and turn it into electricity. It’s a renewable energy source going largely unused. Legislation I will again pursue this year will provide incentives to companies investing in this sustainable energy source.



Cutting red tape, better planning for disaster relief

This fall’s rain and windstorm was devastating. Based off the calls I received, it’s clear our emergency response did a commendable job, but there is a lot more we could do. Communities cut-off due to flooded and blocked roadways were panicked—rightfully so. I’m continuing to work with my colleagues to better prepare us for any type of disaster.

✔ Getting help to people when they need it most

After the winds died down, people immediately started the clean-up effort. People put out of work by the storm were shocked to find unemployment benefits wouldn’t be provided to them—stopped by red tape and bureaucracy. I’ve already begun to ask about the problem and will pursue legislation (HB 2626) to prevent this in the future.



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Please
place
stamp
here

